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Publications Review Board

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(U) Use of Official Title and Resources in Letters of Recommendation or Character References

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Often times, federal employees are asked to write letters of recommendation or reference for an individual. The general rule is that an employee may not use or permit the use of his Agency position or title in a manner that could be construed to imply the Agency sanctions or endorses the employee's personal activities or those of another. As an exception, an employee may sign a letter of recommendation using his or her official title in response to a request for an employment recommendation or character reference based upon personal knowledge of the ability and character of an individual with whom he or she has dealt in the course of federal employment or whom he or she is recommending for federal employment.

For instance, an Agency employee who is asked to provide a letter of recommendation for a former subordinate may provide the recommendation using official stationery and may sign the letter using his or her official title. If, however, the request is for the recommendation of a personal friend with whom he or she has not dealt in the government, the employee may not use official stationery or sign the letter using his or her official title, unless the recommendation is for federal employment. As a reminder, if the individual making the request is a contractor employee, check first with the COTR or CO before issuing any recommendation or character reference to ensure that your actions are permissible within procurement regulations and policies. If you have any questions, please

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The accredited security level of this system is: ~~TOP SECRET//SI~~

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- (U) PRB Guidance on Personal Use of Government Property (Design Portfolio) (IRO Review and Form 879 Required)

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